

ANCIENT ARMILLÆ OF GOLD

FOUND IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE. &c.

GOLD ORNAMENTS.

Torc-armilla found at Wendover Dean



No. 1.

Size of original. Weight, 4 ozs. 12 dwts

Robert Fox, Esq.

Found at St. Albans.



No. 2.

Much reduced. Weight, 20 grs. eas.

From Camden's Brit. by Gough.

ANCIENT ARMILLÆ OF GOLD RECENTLY FOUND IN BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND IN NORTH BRITAIN: WITH NOTICES OF ORNAMENTS OF GOLD DISCOVERED IN THE BRITISH ISLANDS.

DURING the early part of the last year a remarkable golden ornament, of a type, as far as I am aware, hitherto unpublished, was found on the Chiltern Hills, on the estates of Robert Fox, Esq., in the parish of Wendover. By the kind permission of that gentleman this relic of antiquity was exhibited at one of the meetings of the Institute: and my thanks are now due to him for enabling me to record the following particulars regarding the discovery.

It is an *armilla*, which, as shown by the representation here given (No. 1.), is of the class of ornaments bearing resemblance to certain forms of the *torc*, composed of one or more bars or wires of metal wreathed or twisted together. The name *torc* has, however, been generally used to designate collars and ornaments for the neck, the varieties of which have been so ably classified by Mr. Birch in previous volumes of this Journal.¹

This curious torc-armilla, if I may be permitted to use the term, now under consideration, is a wreath of four threads, composed of two rounded bars of considerable thickness, with two twisted wires, of much slighter dimensions, wound spirally between them. The whole is very skilfully wreathed together, and welded into one piece at the extremities, which taper towards a point, and are cut off obtusely without any indication of a hook or fastening. The weight of the bracelet is 4 oz. 12 dwts.

This beautiful ornament, according to the information kindly communicated by Mr. Fox, was found on May 24, 1848, upon a farm in his possession, in that part of the parish of Wendover, called Wendover Dean, and in the occupation of Mr. James Olliff. One of his labourers named Charles Rockell, employed in ploughing, observed the gold glittering on the ridge of his fresh-turned furrow: he picked

¹ Archaeol. Journal, vol. ii. p. 368; vol. iii. p. 27.

it up, and on return from his work it was carried to his master.² The piece of ground where the bracelet was thus brought to light by the plough, had been woodland, covered with beech-trees, from which the county of Buckingham is supposed to have derived its name. In title-deeds, bearing date 1696, the name of this wood is written "Rideings" grove or coppice. In later times it has been known as "Riddings" wood. The field at the present time bears the same name,—the Riddings.³ In the winter of 1845 Mr. Fox had caused this wood to be cut down and grubbed up. The tenant had repeatedly ploughed and harrowed the soil; and, doubtless, the grubbing up of deep roots had brought this precious object to the surface, but it had remained concealed till the last spring. There is nothing about the field, such as a hillock or tumulus, nor any traditions concerning the locality, tending to throw light on this interesting discovery. Wendover is situate in one of the vallies of the Chiltern Hills, and this old woodland is on the brow of a hill on the west side of the valley. The farm, of which it is part, had been known by the name of "Dutchlands" as far back as the year 1696.⁴ In the Ordnance Survey and some other maps the name is written Ditchland.

Although no ancient vestiges of occupation now appear near the spot where this discovery occurred, there are various points in the neighbourhood deserving notice, in connexion with the present inquiry. I am not aware that any Roman remains worthy of mention have been found in those parts, with the exception of the tessellated pavement, excavated in 1774, at High Wycombe, about six miles to the southward. The ancient way, known as the Upper and Lower Icknield, called, in some parts of Bucks, "Achnel

² This is not the only discovery recently made in this manner, in the county of Bucks. A fine pair of silver armlets, found in ploughing at Castlethorpe, with Roman coins, are given in the *Journal of the Archaeol. Assoc.*, vol. ii., p. 353.

³ Mr. Hartshorne, in his useful *Remarks on Names of Places*, appended to the "*Salopia Antiqua*," has noticed this, as occurring in two localities, called "Riddings," one near Broseley, the other near Ludlow. He suggests a derivation from C. Brit. Rhudd, *ruber*, on account of the colour of the soil, which, at one of the places in question, suddenly becomes red. "Or do they take their name from the A.

Sax. hreddan, *liberare*, that is, land cleared of wood? There is a Ridding Wood near Maer, county Stafford." It can scarcely be questioned that lands assarted were thus called, from the Ang. Sax. hredding, *ereptio*; the name occurs in various places, near woodland districts, for instance, Reddings, near Monks' Risborough, Bucks; Ridding Farm, on the skirts of King's Wood, Kent; Ridinghurst, Surrey, &c.

⁴ It was the property, at the time, of a Col. Bateman, and it has been conjectured that the name Dutchlands in some manner originated in the times of the Prince of Orange, and that the said Colonel might have served in his Dutch Guards.

way," ran towards Wendover, and the principal line crosses the Watling-street, about thirteen miles north-east of that town, at Dunstable. The Akeman-street, also, in its course from the Watling, by Berkhamstead, towards Aylesbury and Alcester, traverses the Icknield, about four miles from the spot where this gold armlet was disinterred. Not far to the westward is an ancient hill-fortress, near Prince's Risborough, commonly called "the Black Prince's Palace;" it was doubtless on account of its commanding position, a stronghold in early British times. Here also, at Kimble, or Kunebal, is the supposed scene of stirring events at that period: the name has been traced to Cunobelin, the locality having, possibly, been the field of the memorable conflict in which the sons of that prince were defeated by Plautius, A.D. 43. In the adjoining parish of Ellesborough is an ancient fortress, traditionally called the Castle of Belinus, and above it is a height retaining the name of Belinesbury. The Whiteleaf, or White Cliff, Cross, found in the same neighbourhood, is supposed to be the memorial of a victory by the Saxons over the Danes, who repeatedly ravaged this country. In the times just preceding the Conquest, the thick woods covering the Chiltern, of which some vestiges have only of late been assarted at Wendover Dean by Mr. Fox, had become a refuge for robbers and outlaws, to the great annoyance of travellers. These fastnesses were in great part cleared, and the woods cut down, by Leofstan, Abbot of St. Albans, in the reign of Edward the Confessor.⁵

As regards the age to which this curious relic may properly be assigned, I must admit that I have been unable to form a satisfactory conclusion. It appears too elaborately fashioned to have been of British or Gaulish origin, nor has it the characteristics of Roman workmanship, which might lead us to class it with the *armillæ*, presented with *torques*, *phaleræ*, and other marks of distinction for military service. The ancient use of golden armlets of the wreathed type, is shown by the remarkable ornaments found in Britany in 1832, and described by the Rev. John Bathurst Deane, in an interesting Memoir in the *Archaeologia*.⁶ These, however, are solid, not formed of several bars twined together like a cord; but some

⁵ M. Paris, *Lives of the Abbots of St. Albans*.

⁶ *Archaeologia*, vol. xxvii., Plates I., II.

examples in that singular discovery were engraved with spiral lines in imitation of the twist.

My own opinion would incline to attribute the armilla to a later age, and to regard it as a work of the renowned artificers of Anglo-Saxon times ; deposited, possibly, in the wild retreats of the Chiltern woodlands, by some lawless plunderer in the times of Alfred or the Confessor. Bracelets of gold, it will be remembered, were not uncommon in the Anglo-Saxon age : the “*earn-beag*” was an ornament much in vogue, and of great weight and value. The golden bracelets bequeathed to the King and Queen by Brihtric, one of the thanes of Archbishop Ælfric, may be cited ; the bracelet of sixty mancuses, mentioned in the will of Wulfere ;⁷ and William of Malmsbury states, that Earl Godwin, desirous of propitiating Hardicanute, A.D. 1040, presented to him a ship decorated with gold, and containing eighty warriors gorgeously armed, “*qui haberent in brachiis singulis armillas duas, unamquamque sedecim unciarum auri.*” This historian even asserts that the inhabitants of Britain, at the arrival of the Conqueror, were—“*armillis aureis brachiis onerati.*”

I hope that antiquaries, more conversant than myself with foreign or other collections, may determine the date and the people to which Mr. Fox’s armilla should be assigned. The only sure guide in such inquiries would be supplied by facilities for comparison in a national collection ; and, whilst regretting the deficiency of any sufficient series of British antiquities, available for public information, it is highly gratifying to be enabled to state the generous intention of Mr. Fox, to deposit this armilla in the British Museum, as a contribution towards the formation of a series, the urgent want of which is daily felt by English antiquaries.

It may be interesting to notice certain ornaments existing in Britain of analogous fashion with that found near Wendover. In the small collection of ancient British ornaments, preserved in the British Museum, a pair of armillæ may be seen, stated to have been discovered in this country. The cord is simple, formed of two threads, tapering considerably towards the extremities : the fastening is contrived by means of a hook and eye. A representation of one of these armlets has been

⁷ Text. Roff. Hicckes, Dissert. Epist. Two *brachiolæ* of gold, weighing forty-five mancuses, are mentioned in Heming.

Chart. p. 86. The mancus is supposed to have been worth from 6s. to 7s. 6d. of our currency.

given in Dr. Smith's "Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities," (v. Armilla,) and may be seen in the last volume of the Archaeological Journal.⁸

A slender gold armlet, formed in like manner of two wires wreathed together, was found in 1845 at Downham, Norfolk. It was unfortunately condemned to the crucible; but a representation has been preserved in the "Transactions of the Norfolk Archaeological Society," Vol. i., p. 231, with a memoir by the Rev. James Bulwer. In Ireland, where ornaments of gold are found in greater profusion than in this country, armlets of this fashion are of less rarity. Two good examples, from Lord Albert Conyngham's collection, are given in the Archaeologia.⁹ They were found near the entrance of the Caves at New Grange. None of these, however, precisely resemble the Wendover armilla, except in general character, as belonging to the class of wreathed, or torc-ornaments.

In the neighbouring county of Herts, an ancient torc-ornament of gold, weight twenty guineas, was found in 1744, in the grounds of Caleb Lomax, Esq., of Park Street, St. Albans. I am not aware whether it is still in existence. For the sake of comparison with the Wendover armilla, a representation is here given, from Gough's edition of Camden's Britannia; although unskilfully portrayed, this may suffice to show that it was an ornament of analogous type, but formed of two wires only.¹ (No. 2.) Gough describes it as a *fibula*, but the notion of its dimensions, by comparison of its weight, (about 5 oz. 15 dwts.) may fairly lead to the conclusion that it had been an *armilla*. A second ornament of gold, apparently a kind of torc, was found near the same locality, in 1748; it came into the hands of Gale, and is described as "a wreathed or vermicular ornament, being a solid chain of gold, dug up near Old Verulam."² In the same county a gold "torc" was found in 1787, at Ware; the extremities terminated in cups, or hollow bell-shaped ends³

⁸ Archaeol. Journal, vol. v., p. 341.

⁹ Archaeologia, vol. xxx., Plate XII., p. 137.

¹ Camd. Brit. Vol. ii., Plate III., p. 72.

² The discovery, at St. Albans, of the precious ornaments above mentioned, calls to mind the golden "bracelets," presented to the shrine of St. Alban by Henry III. in 1244, as Newcome and other writers

state, on the authority of Matthew Paris. The words of the historian are as follows:—"Obtulit unam pallam preciosam, et tria *monilia* aurea, feretro apponenda—cum tamen ante septem obtulisset." *Monile*, however, properly denotes a jewel, a pendant ornament, not a bracelet.

³ Gent. Mag., Sept. 1800.

I regret my inability to state of what form were the gold armillæ found in ground, recently cleared of wood, in the parish of Little Amwell, Herts ; they were exhibited to the Society of Antiquaries, June 13, 1816, by Charles Stokes, Esq., F.S.A. The weight of one was 2 oz. 8 dwt. 3 grs. ; of the other, 2 oz. 2 dwt. 12 grs.⁴

From the ancient territories of the Cattieuchlani, we now turn to the remote eastern shores of North Britain, and the exquisite golden ornaments recently there found. Whilst I was occupied in seeking examples analogous to the armlet communicated to the Institute by Mr. Fox, a pair of very beautiful armillæ of another type were most kindly entrusted to me by Mr. Richard Dundas, of Arniston ; my acknowledgment is also due to Mr. Patrick Chalmers, of Auldbar, and Mr. Cosmo Innes, through whose friendly communications and mediation I have been permitted to examine these precious relics. I have the gratification of giving a representation of one of these armlets (No. 3.), drawn by the skilful hand of Mr. Henry Shaw, F.S.A. They were found at Largo, in Fifeshire, and Mr. Dundas, on whose family estates the discovery occurred, has favoured me with the following particulars :—"Largo is on the south coast of Fifeshire, at the head of a bay, well sheltered from the north and east winds, and affording the only safe anchorage for small vessels in that neighbourhood. From its position, near the mouth of the Frith of Forth, with the advantage of a good anchorage, it may probably have been a favourite landing-place of the Northern freebooters. The gold bracelets were found last winter (1848) on the top of a steep bank, which slopes down to the sea, among some loose earth, which was being dug to be carted away. The soil is sandy, and the men had dug about three feet deep, where the bracelets lay. It was at a place close to the sea-shore, called the Temple, which is part of the village of Lower Largo. An old woman, who has lived close to the spot all her days, says that in her youth some coffins were found there, and one man was supposed to have found a treasure, having suddenly become rich enough to build a house."

These beautiful ornaments are formed of a thin plate or riband of gold, skilfully twisted, the spiral line being pre-

⁴ Archaeologia, vol. xviii., p. 446.

GOLD ORNAMENTS.

Found at Largo, in Fifeshire.



No. 3.

Size of original. Weight, 8 dwts. 4 g. s. : = 196 grs.

Richard Dundas, Esq., of Arniston.

served with singular precision. The fastening is by means of a hook and a little knob or button; the elastic flexibility of the ornament is very remarkable: it perfectly exemplifies the definition given by Scheffer,—“*tortus et flexilis*.” It would be easy to multiply examples of torc-ornaments more or less similar in type, found in this country, and especially in Ireland; but none that I have seen possess an equal degree of elegance and perfection of workmanship. Well-suited as the bay of Largo may appear to have been the resort of the Northmen, whose predatory incursions ravaged those coasts, we are reluctant to suppose so graceful an ornament to be of Danish origin,—a relic of the armlets so freely dispensed by Rollo, as to entitle him, according to ancient song, to be celebrated as *Wreiter Hedda*, scatterer of gold.

It would be very interesting to ascertain precisely at what period, and through what influence, the rude tribes whose accustomed weapons were of flint or of bone, whose choicest ornaments were of amber or jet, first became acquainted with the use of bronze and iron, and especially with the precious metals; the estimation of, and skill in working these seems to mark an important advance in civilisation. The assertion of Tacitus, in his observations on the manners of the ancient Germans—often cited as tending to prove that gold and silver were almost unknown to the nations of the North as late as the close of the first century of the Christian era—may appear of little moment in connection with inquiries regarding our own country. It is certain that ornaments of gold were commonly used in Gaul at an early period; and there is the highest probability that, if gold were not discovered in the rocks or sandy beds of mountain streams in Britain, these ornaments would be introduced from the adjacent coasts, with the rude coins—the first of our numismatic series, found most frequently in southern counties, and, probably, of Gaulish origin. Cicero, indeed, has twice asserted, in his *Epistles*, that no gold or silver was to be found in Britain; but the evidence of Tacitus, in the *Life of Agricola*, seems conclusive as to the existence of precious metals having been ascertained:—“*Fert Britannia aurum et argentum et alia metalla, pretium victoriæ*.” That the Romans were not negligent in the development of the mineral resources of Britain, and even detected gold in the

quartz rocks of Wales, seems to have been proved by the interesting Notices of Mr. Johnes and Mr. Warrington Smyth, regarding the Ogofau Mine in Carmarthenshire.⁵ The local tradition—the discovery of Roman pottery, ornaments, and a bath—the name “Conwill Gaio,” supposed to signify the advanced post of Caius, and other circumstances, appear to justify the conclusion that the ancient workings there found are of Roman times.

The antiquities of the earlier periods, including all remains which bear no evident stamp of Roman origin or influence, claim our most careful investigation. Exceedingly limited in variety of types, these vestiges of the ancient inhabitants of Great Britain are not more interesting to the antiquarian collector, on account of their rarity, than valuable to the historian. They supply the only positive evidence, in those obscure ages, regarding customs, warfare, foreign invasions, or the influence of commerce and the advance of civilisation amongst the earliest races by which these islands were peopled. The true classification of these remains is of much importance: there is still the risk of erroneous conclusions, from inconsiderately designating as “Celtic,” or “Primeval,” ancient objects which perplex the antiquary by singularity of form or undefined character. With this view, I am desirous of submitting to the more careful consideration of archaeologists certain remarkable types of rare annular ornaments of gold discovered in Britain. I am not prepared, at present, to offer any speculations on the probable age to which each variety may be attributed: my object being rather to record facts—materials which may perhaps hereafter serve, in more able hands, as the groundwork of satisfactory conclusions on this interesting subject.

The most simple type of gold ornament discovered in these islands is the ring, formed of a rounded bar of equal thickness throughout, bent into circular form, and the extremities left disunited. These objects, sometimes characterised, on that account, as “penannular,” are already well known to our readers as of frequent occurrence in Ireland, where they are designated by most antiquaries as “ring-money,” of which several notices have been given in this Journal. I do not propose to enter upon the question, nor

⁵ Geological Memoirs, vol. i., Pl. VIII., and Murchison's Silurian System.

am disposed to controvert the supposition, that these rings may have served as currency. It is highly probable that, in primitive times, when barter afforded to traffic the sole approach towards facilities subsequently obtained by a circulating medium, such rings passed as money. It has been confidently stated that an uniform rule of progressive weight may be established, by the comparison of rings of various sizes ; and, if so curious a fact can be shown in regard to these rings, it would certainly go far towards confirming the notion of their pecuniary value.

By the friendly aid of an obliging correspondent, the Rev. Charles Bingham, of Bingham's Melcumbe, Dorset, I am enabled to state, that gold ornaments, similar to the Irish "ring-money," have been recently discovered in that county. I owe to his kindness the annexed representation of a small gold ring, in the possession of Mr. Charles Hall, of Ansty, near Blandford, (No. 4.) It was found at Abbey Milton, Dorset, in a potato-field. The weight is 4 dwts. 8 grs. This weight, (104 grs.) is not divisible, according to the rule received in regard to similar Irish rings, by six. A second gold ring of this type, found also near Blandford, is in the collection of Mr. Charles Warne. This, as I am informed, was found by a person cutting turf upon Piddletown Heath, Dorset. Two small beads were discovered near it. It is a very singular fact that plain gold rings, of precisely similar form, the extremities not being united, pass current as money at the present day in some parts of Africa. Sir William Betham and other antiquaries have regarded this as a strong argument in favour of the supposed Irish "ring-money."⁶ I am indebted to the Duke of Northumberland for the opportunity of examining specimens of African gold money, especially interesting as having been made under his own inspection at Sennaar. His Grace favoured me with the following particulars : he chanced to notice a blacksmith occupied in forming these rings, and inquiring as to their use, the man replied, that having no work in hand for his forge, he was making money. The gold wire, being very flexible, was bent into rings, without precise conformity in regard to weight, and was thus converted into money. One of these rings is

⁶ See Trans. of R. I. Acad., vol. xvii., p. 91 ; and Sir William Betham's *Etruria Celtica* ; Mr. Lindsay's *View of the Coin-*

age of Ireland ; and Mr. Dickinson on *African Ring Money*, *Numism. Chron.*, Jan. 1844.

here represented, (No. 5.) ; a little mark is punched near the extremities, on both sides, but this did not appear to have any distinctive intention : any person was permitted to fabricate ring-money ; it passed current by weight ; the gold is so flexible, that the rings are readily opened, to be linked into a chain for the convenience of keeping them together, and as readily detached, when a payment was to be made.

Mr. Bingham has also kindly supplied drawings of two open *grooved* rings of gold, found in Dorsetshire, of a type not hitherto noticed. Their fashion and dimensions are shown by the annexed wood-cuts. The smaller specimen, (No. 6.), in the possession of Mr. Charles Hall, weighs 23 grs. The second (No. 7.) is in the collection of Mr. Charles Warne, and weighs 10 dwts., 18 grs., (258 grs., divisible exactly by six.) The grooves, Mr. Bingham suggests, may possibly indicate graduation in value. The notion had struck him, proposed likewise by Colonel Vallancey, that penannular ornaments might have served as nose-rings, the narrow opening serving to clip the *septum* of the nose.⁷

An interesting crescent-shaped variety of the gold “penannular” ornaments is preserved in the valuable Museum formed by the Hon. Richard Neville, at Audley End. By his obliging permission it is here represented, (No. 8.) It was recently found by a labouring man named Bass, on the Dairy Farm, Thaxted, in Essex. The weight is 240 grains, verifying the remark that the weight of these rings is generally divisible by six. I have not seen any similar English example of *plain* rings of gold, gradually tapering towards their extremities. The annular horned ornament of brass, *plated* with gold, found by Sir R. Colt Hoare in a tumulus near Amesbury, with objects of gold, bears some resemblance to this, but the broad part is perforated, as if for suspension. (Ancient Wilts, Vol. i., Pl. XXV. p. 201.) There is a representation of a ring, precisely resembling Mr. Neville’s, found in Ireland, with others of silver, communicated to the Society of Antiquaries by the Bishop of Meath, and given in the *Archaeologia*, Vol. ii., Pl. I. It is described as “a small lunular fibula of gold.” Rings of this crescent type, either

⁷ Vallancey, *Collect. de Rebus Hibern.*, vol. vi., p. 270. Compare the account of customs of the savage natives of Nootka-sound, described in *Cook’s Voyages*, vol. ii., edit. 1785, p. 305. The supposition that nose-rings were used in Britain had been

admitted by Scotch antiquaries. See the gold armillæ, ear-rings and nose-rings (as conjectured) found in a rude urn in Bamffshire. *Archaeologia Scotica*, vol. iv., Pl. XII.

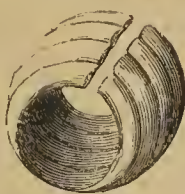
GOLD ORNAMENTS.

Gold Rings found in Dorsetshire.



No. 4.

Weight, 4 dwts. 8 grs.
Size of original.
Mr. Charles Hall.



No. 6.

Weight, 23 grs.
Size of original.
Mr. Charles Hall.



No. 7.

Weight, 10 dwts. 18 grs.
Size of original.
Mr. Charles Warne.

African Ring-money, from Sennaar.



No. 5.

Size of original.
In the possession of the Duke of Northumberland.

Found at Thaxted, Essex,



No. 8.

Size of original. Weight, 240 grs.
The Hon. R. C. Neville's Museum

Found near Patcham, Sussex.



No. 16.

Size of original. Weight, 2 ozs. 5 dwts. 6 grs.
Colonel Paine.

GOLD ORNAMENTS.

Found in Suffolk.



No. 14.

Size of original. Weight, 12 dwts. 14 grs.
Mr. Whincopp's Museum.

Found at Bormer, Sussex.



No. 15.

Size of original. Weight, 10 dwts. 18 grs.
Dr. Mantell's Museum.

African.



No. 10.

Munismatic Society's Museum.

Found near Sligo.



No. 9.

Size of original. Weight, 2 dwts. 12 grs.
Mr. Edward Hoare's Museum.

Found near Belfast.



No. 12.

Weight, 4 dwts

African.



No. 11.

Munismatic Society's Museum

Torc-ring, found near Waterford.



No. 13.

Weight, 8 dwts. 6 grs.
Piltown Museum.

twisted or beaded, occur also in Ireland, and have been communicated to the Institute by an obliging correspondent in Cork, Mr. Edward Hoare. (See *Archaeol. Journ.* Vol. ii., p. 198.) A fragment of a curious twisted ring of gold, found in a turf-bog, near Sligo, is in Mr. Hoare's collection, (see No. 9.), closely resembling a specimen from Africa, presented to the Numismatic Society by Mr. Dickinson,⁸ and another from Timbuctoo, preserved in the United Service Museum. Of the former, with another gold ring from the interior of Africa, presented to the Numismatic Society by Mr. Hampden, as also of an Irish ring, found near Belfast, of the beaded type (weight, 4 dwts.), I have been enabled to give representations by the kindness of Mr. John Yonge Akerman. (Nos. 10, 11, 12.)

From these more simple types we proceed to the curious torc-rings, and ornaments formed of several wires curiously intertwined, and united together on one side. We were indebted to Mr. Hoare on a former occasion for an interesting example (No. 13), found near Waterford, analogous in character to the armilla represented in this Journal, Vol. v., p. 154. Another specimen, reported to have been found on Flodden Field, was communicated by the Rev. Dr. Hume.⁹ It was in the possession of Mr. Paton, who had a similar ring, found at Dunfermline. In the Museum of Mr. Whincopp, at Woodbridge, a fine gold ring of the same type is preserved, of which a representation is here given. (No. 14.) The weight is 12 dwts. 14 grs. This ring was found in Suffolk, and has been supposed to be an ornament for the ear, but its weight appears too great to have allowed of its being thus worn. Another curious specimen, formed of two square bars or wires, wreathed together and welded at the extremities, is in Dr. Mantell's Museum, and of this also a figure is submitted to our readers, (No. 15.) It was found in ploughing on the Sussex Downs, at Bormer, near Falmer, and presented to Dr. Mantell by the late Earl of Chichester.¹

I will now briefly notice a few other ornaments of gold, rarely discovered in Great Britain. The first are the massive rings with dilated ends, either of circular or horse-shoe form, and disunited, obviously for the convenience of the wearer.

⁸ See Mr. Dickinson's Memoir in the *Numism. Chron.*, Jan. 1844; and a paper by Mr. Hoare on ring-money with pointed ends, *Numism. Chron.*, April, 1844.

⁹ Weight of the Irish ring, 8 dwts. 6 grs.

Weight of the ring from Flodden, 8 dwts. 17 grs. It is represented in *Archaeol. Journ.*, vol. iii., p. 269.

¹ This ring was described and figured in Horsfield's *History of Lewes*. Pl. IV.

They bear a close analogy to the Gaulish "*manaks*," as designated by Mr. Deane in his valuable Memoir on Gold Ornaments found at Vieuxbourg, near Quentin, in Britany². Three interesting relics of this nature, found with earthen vessels and bones on the Downs, near Patcham, Sussex, were kindly communicated to the Institute by Colonel Paine, of Patcham Place, through Mr. Blaauw. One of them is formed of copper, thickly plated with gold. A representation of one specimen is given, (No. 16.): weight 2 oz. 5 dwts. 6 grs.; the inner side is flat, with rather angular edges. On being assayed, the gold was found largely alloyed with silver, (in the proportion of 5 oz. 6 dwts. 18 grs. pure gold, and 6 oz. 5 dwts. of silver, in the pound Troy). The second weighed 5 oz. 5 dwts. 12 grs., with a much slighter admixture of silver, (about 1 oz. 6 dwts. in the pound Troy). The plated ring weighed 4 oz. Four gold armillæ of very similar type, but less massive, had been found, in 1806, on the shore near East Bourne, immediately under Beachy Head, with a bronze spear, five celts, a portion of a bronze sword, and lumps of copper, apparently very pure.³ They were sent to the Society of Antiquaries by Mr. Holt, a watchmaker of East Bourne, and sold, through the late Sir Joseph Banks. The weights were, 3 oz. 1 dwt.,—1 oz. 10 dwts.,—18 dwts. 2 grs., and 16 dwts. 4 grs. A figure of one is given in the *Archæologia*, Vol. xvi., Pl. LXVIII. A similar object was found in May, 1802, at Drayton, between Reepham and Norwich, and sold to Messrs. Denham, silversmiths in that city, for twenty guineas. It was perfectly round and plain, without engraved line or ornament, the ends dilated; the weight was 7 oz. 3 dwts. 21 grs. Another, found near Aspatria in Cumberland, December, 1828, was slightly ornamented with circular lines, and small notches along the edges; it was supposed that certain Runes might be discerned incised near one of its extremities; they were explained by the late Mr. Hamper to signify GEROT—*i.e.* *fabricavit*, the name or monogram of the maker having been, as he conjectured, effaced. It seems very doubtful, however, whether the supposed characters were more than accidental scratches.⁴ The weight of this armlet was 5 oz. 10 dwts. 6 grs.

² *Archæologia*, vol. xxvii., Pl. I., p. 11.

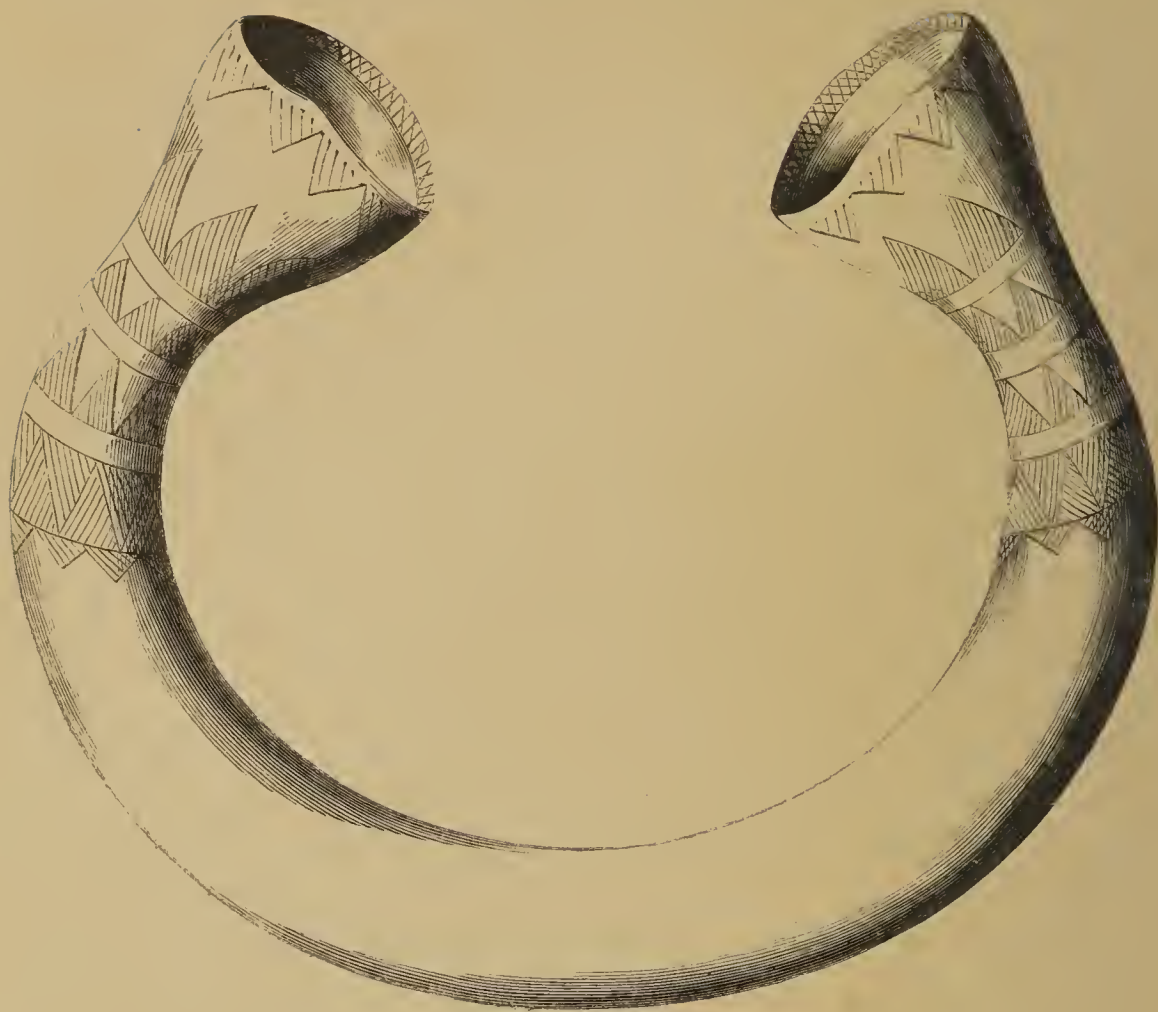
³ A considerable mass of the cliff had fallen with a portion of the sward, about Christmas, 1806, and one of the celts being noticed projecting from the newly bared face of the cliff, search was made, and the antiquities found on the shore. It was

supposed that they had been deposited with bodies interred on the heights above, but no sign of a tumulus appeared.

⁴ See representations of it in the *Archæologia*, vol. xxii., p. 439; *Archæologia Æliana*, vol. ii., p. 268.

GOLD ORNAMENTS

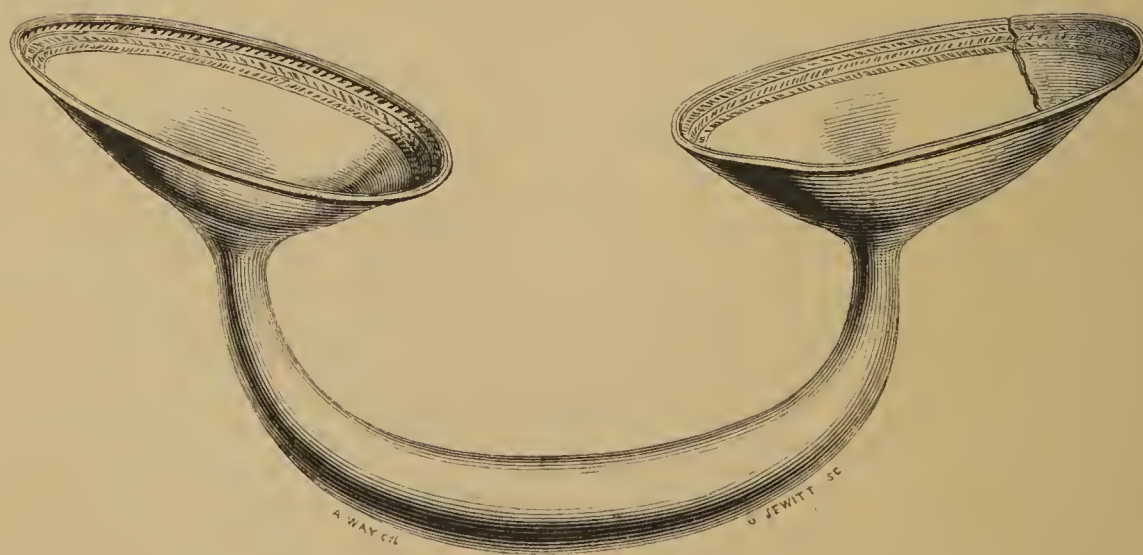
Dug up at Brahalish, near Bantry, Co. Cork.



No. 17.

Size of original. Weight, 3 oz. 5 dwts. 6 grs.

Discovered at Swinton Park, Yorkshire.



No. 18.

Two-thirds size of original.

(2646 grs., exactly divisible by six). Of the same description, probably, were the “gold instruments, resembling a fetterlock or staple,” formerly discovered at the Roman station at Chesterford, Essex. One, weighing 8 lbs., is stated to have been found under a rude thick piece of bronze, about the year 1786, by a miller, who immediately sold it. (Gough’s *Additions to Camden*, Vol. ii., p. 141.) This last must have been a collar or torc, but of enormous weight. It is much to be regretted that no representations of these relics had been preserved. I am not aware whether the gold armlet found in 1761, in the same neighbourhood, at Shortgrove, composed of chain-work, and exhibited to the Society of Antiquaries by Walpole, is now in the possession of the Marquis of Thomond. Neither does any memorial appear of the form of the “large gold ring” found with Anglo-Saxon remains at Sutton, near Ely. (Gough, *ibid.*, pp. 141, 234.)

It may be conjectured, with much probability, that these massive ornaments were occasionally, if not usually, worn as anklets, and they were not dissimilar to those worn at the present day in Egypt, and Eastern countries. Gold rings of this description are frequently found in Ireland, some perfectly plain, of equal thickness throughout; others with the ends slightly dilated;—or with the ends slightly concave;—others again with these cavities assuming the form of a cup, and at length the singular cups so expanded as to present the appearance of the mouth of a trumpet, or the calix of a large flower. Sometimes the dilated extremities are flat and thin plates, like cymbals, and the connecting neck diminutive in proportion to their exaggerated size.⁵ A few of these remarkable relics of unknown origin and antiquity have been found in Britain: an unique example, terminating in club-shaped extremities, found in Dumfries-shire, deserves especial notice, as bearing the name HELENVS F., and the letters, MB.—*Archæologia*, Vol. ii., Pl. III.

Of the intermediate type, with dilated ends slightly hollowed, no example has hitherto been noticed, to my knowledge, in England or North Britain: one, of singular value, admirably exemplifying the progressive variation of type, has been sent from the sister island by our obliging correspondent at Cork, Mr. Edward Hoare, (No. 17.) Of the

⁵ *Archæologia*, vol. ii., Pl. I. See also various forms in Gough’s edit. of *Camden*, vol. iv., p. 231; the works of Col. Vallancey; the *Dublin Penny Journal*, vol. i.,

p. 413; and Sir W. Betham’s *Memoir on the Ring Money of the Celts*, *Trans. R. I. Acad.*, vol. xvii.

next form, with terminal cups, a fine specimen was brought to light in the parish of Masham, North Riding of Yorkshire, and most kindly communicated from the Swinton Park Museum, by desire of Mrs. Danby Harcourt, through Mr. Charles Tucker, (No. 18.) This curious gold ornament, weighing 5 oz. 7 dwts. 22 grs., was found near the entrance lodge at Swinton Park, about 1815, scarcely two feet below the surface. Two objects, of analogous description, had been found near Ripon, in 1780, as stated by Gough.⁶ Another was discovered in 1773 near the Lizard Point, Cornwall, and similar ornaments have occurred in North Britain ; one, found in 1731, stated to have been deposited in an urn, is figured in the *Archæologia*, Vol. ii., p. 40, and *Reliquiæ Galeanæ*, Bibl. Top. Brit. No. 11, part 1, Pl. VI. In the following year two gold ornaments of the same type were found in the mud of a lake in Galloway, drained by order of the Earl of Stair, as also a “bracelet of gold consisting of two circles, very artificially folding or twisting into one another.”⁷

It has been conjectured that these ornaments of gold, of which no specimen, I believe, has been discovered in any foreign country, might have served the purpose of a fastening for the mantle or other garment. Some antiquaries have been disposed to assign to them a mystic or sacred import.

Having thus endeavoured to record the discovery of some antiquities, of a very remarkable class, in Britain, generally regarded as almost peculiar to Ireland, I must reserve to a future occasion some notices of certain gold ornaments of other types, equally deserving of careful investigation.

ALBERT WAY.

⁶ Additions to Camden's *Brit.*, vol. iv., p. 231. One of these weighed as much as 9 oz. 10 dwts. Another was exhibited to the Soc. of Antiquaries in 1740, from Sir Hans Sloane's Collection.

⁷ They were in the possession of the Countess of Stair. See Sir John Clerk's

Letters to Gale, May, 1732. *Bibl. Topog.* Vol. iii., pp. 280, 297. His remarks on the use of gold in Scotland in ancient times, and on digging for gold in that country, found in strata of sand, as in the borders of Hungary, at Nitria and Presburg, deserve notice.—*Ibid.*, p. 299.